

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



January 06, 2016

After SAFF Loss

There were high hopes that Afghanistan would win the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship final for the second time; but the Afghan team could not make it in an interesting final match against India.

Though Afghan team faced a defeat the fans were not really disappointed and they gathered in a large number at the airport to receive the Afghan players.

For Afghanistan it is really a great achievement that Afghan team could qualify for the final. Looking at the socio-political scenario, it is really difficult to expect that the country is in a position where it can concentrate properly on different games.

Nonetheless, it is important that different sports and games must be promoted within a country as it will develop not only sportsmanship but also support in solving certain social evils as well.

Sports can also be a way of earning fame and respect for the country. Different individuals and teams basically represent different nations in the regional and international sports event.

Even though sports have not been able to get enough attention by the concerned authorities in Afghanistan, different individuals and teams have performed really well in some of the events at regional and international levels.

With these titles on their chests, the sportsmen in Afghanistan have shown that they are not inferior to others and more attention can really turn them into heroes who would be able to earn respect and honor for the country.

On the other hand, sportsmen also require support from the people. The affection and support of the people can fill the hearts of the players with motivation and determination and, therefore, they will be able to do their best.

Our country is undergoing the influence of war, instability and disorder to a large extent. The enemies of the nation have nothing else to offer except bloodshed and violence. The people are really afraid of the situation and they want entertainment and amusement. And, they can achieve all these only through sports.

In the recent times, it has been observed that the politicians have not been able to achieve, what the sportsmen have acquired for the nation.

They have brought the down-trodden people of Afghanistan a ray of hope and a realization of the fact that the Afghans are capable of performing well in all fields of life. Politics has only brought rifts within the people and has divided them on ethnic lines, but the games have saved their unity and their honor.

It is really important for the authorities in Afghanistan to understand that the games and sportsmen have a higher role than just playing games; therefore, they should be given due attention and they should be provided with the facilities so that they are able to compete with other nations of the world.

If promoted properly, sports can turn into a weapon to fight against the evils like terrorism and drugs, which have influenced our nation, especially our youth to a large extent. We, therefore, need to promote sports and make it a way to divert the attention of the youth from these evils.

Beleaguered Foreign Policy

By Abdul Ahad Bahrami

The recent-days visit of Afghanistan's CEO Abdullah Abdullah to Iran has come particularly under spotlight as its timing was coincided with or came after some important political developments in the region: the renewed efforts for resumption of peace talks, Indian PM's visit to Afghanistan and the rising tensions between Saudi Arabia - along with some other Arab nations - and Iran.

CEO Abdullah's visit to Iran came at a time when the Afghan government is stepping up its efforts to kick-start the peace process, and a meeting is set to be held in Islamabad with representatives from Pakistan, China and the United States.

Afghanistan has always tried to ease Iran's concerns over the developments related to the war and peace efforts including the long-term presence of the foreign troops in the country and the peace talks with the Taliban. While this round of peace efforts is being considered, Afghanistan expects Iran to support efforts for peace in Afghanistan.

On the hand, the national unity government brought a considerable shift since it came to power in foreign policy and the relations with the

major powers of Muslim world. In an attempt to gain support of the major Muslim countries to the Afghan peace efforts, the Afghan government did an apparent sway to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, which meant distancing the country from Iran.

Though the Afghan officials have maintained that there were no relations between Abdullah's trip to Tehran and the increasing tensions between the two rival Muslim powers, the Afghan government's Muslim world policy seems to be in a fresh trouble.

Expectedly, after Afghanistan started swinging towards Saudi Arabia and Kabul announced support for the Saudi Arabia's stance in the Yemen conflict, media reports emerged over Iran's alleged relations with the Taliban.

Abdullah's visit to Chabahar port of Iran is said to be a major part of his visit to Iran. His visit of the Chabahar port of Iran is a follow-up to the Indian Prime Minister's recent visit to Afghanistan.

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Economic Stagnation - A Relentless Issue

By Hujjatullah Zia

The current economic stagnation and unemployment have compounded poverty across the country. Scores of individuals immigrated to foreign lands to flee the relentless financial challenges. However, the war-widowed women and orphaned children are left at the mercy of pain and suffering emanating from hunger and insecurity.

The destiny is really cruel to the workers who labor from the dawn to the fall of dusk to make the ends meet, however, their rights to life and property are not ensured. Some hawkers, vendors, storekeepers and passersby were killed in suicide bombings in capital city of Kabul within past years while struggling to earn bread for their families.

It would be worthwhile to glance over the agenda of the heads of National Unity Government (NUG) during their presidential campaigns. Afghan CEO Dr. Abdullah Abdullah's agenda for Afghanistan was as: national solidarity; abolishing administrative corruption; dealing with the challenges of the Afghan IDPs; decreasing illiteracy; providing job opportunities; struggling for the betterment of the economy and fighting poverty; commitment for providing human rights, especially women's rights; bringing reformation; attending to the unity of the country's army; establishing good relations with the neighboring countries and establishing a ministry of the Youth Affairs.

President Muhammad Ashraf Ghani declared that if he won the election his future agenda would be as: establishing good governance, combating administrative corruption, building a government based on justice, building infrastructural structure for better economy, giving participatory role to women and youngsters, combating violence, providing nationwide security, strengthening national solidarity and building a strong nation.

Besides bringing in peace and ensuring the citizens' rights, Dr. Abdullah vowed to "provide job opportunities" and "fight poverty". Similarly, Ghani mentioned a list of mouth-watering plans to fulfill including "building infrastructural structure for better economy". However, a year has passed from the establishment of NUG and none of the elements in two aforementioned lists have come true.

government, as the heads stated months ago. Ill-fatedly, militancy and poverty have increased in recent months and political wheeling and dealing deteriorated. The excessive brain drain is a matter of great concern for the public, mainly for Afghan MPs.

It is a great pity to see that the families of war victims are not paid heed by the state. And it is more heart-wrenching when the children of dead soldiers - who sacrificed their lives for the nation - wander on the streets and labor in hot summers and cold winters to get a morsel of bread rather than going to school.

Therefore, it is safe to state that children who live at or below the poverty level will have far less success educationally than children who live above the poverty line. Poor children have a great deal less healthcare and this ultimately results in many absences from the academic year.

Deterioration of living conditions can often compel children to abandon school to contribute to the family income, putting them at risk of being exploited - which is rife in our country.

Constitutionally, the government will have to "form a civil society void of oppression, atrocity, discrimination as well as violence, based on rule of law, social justice, protecting integrity and human rights, and attaining peoples' freedoms and fundamental rights; strengthen political, social, economic as well as defense institutions; attain a prosperous life and sound living environment for all inhabitants of this land; and, eventually, regain Afghanistan's appropriate place in the international family".

It is self-explanatory that security situation plays a significant role in economic issues.

When the rights and safety of NGOs, private investors, stakeholders and traders are not ensured, they will not continue their business at the cost of their life. The government has to give priority to security issue so as to provide a safe environment for the investors and tackle the economic challenges.

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